



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

The Honorable Dean Rusk
The Secretary of State
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Rusk:

During the course of my appearances before the Defense Subcommittee of House Appropriations Committee on 4 and 5 February 1963, several members of that Subcommittee raised the point of Under Secretary George Ball's testimony before the House Select Committee on Export Control on 3 October 1962. I have had this matter researched and have developed the following:

1. A proposed statement to be utilized by Secretary Ball was read to me over the gray telephone on 2 October. It was my opinion that it accurately reflected the situation at that time and, further, since there appeared to be no compromise of security, I authorized its use for an open hearing.

2. There was a prefatory statement in Secretary Ball's testimony which was not included in the agreed-on memorandum which reads as follows:

In the last few weeks we have read much in the newspapers of the military buildup of Cuba by the Soviet Union. Quite clearly it does not constitute a threat to the United States.

In addition, there were two statements in the agreed memorandum which were not included in Mr. Ball's testimony. These read as follows:

If the SAM sites are to be operated solely by Cuban personnel, six months to a year of training will be required. There is a considerable amount of other new equipment which has not been precisely identified but it is believed to include a large quantity of electronic gear.

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3. During the questioning before the Select Committee, Secretary Ball expanded on this general subject. Some of these points are quoted below:

Mr Ball
These ships are kept under the closest surveillance and we have a system of anti-submarine patrols which I think is quite effective.

~~Subsequently in his testimony, Mr. Ball was asked by Mr. Lipscomb: 'Have you any indication of what the cargo was on these ships?' (He was referring to US ships lent to the USSR under Lend-Lease.) Mr. Ball replied: 'We may have. I don't have it here. We usually know in quite specific terms what cargoes have been carried by Soviet ships, those directly under Soviet operation.'~~ Mr. Lipscomb ~~queried: 'Mostly arms and ammunition?' to which Mr. Ball replied: 'Mostly arms and ammunition, and also technical personnel, military technical personnel, and economic technical personnel as well.'~~

Mr Ball
Our information with regard to the availability of armament in Cuba, including the shipments which have been received in the recent buildup is, we believe, quite complete. Our intelligence is very good and very hard. All the indications are that this equipment which is basically of a defensive nature, and that it does not offer any offensive capabilities to Cuba against the United States or the other nations of the hemisphere.

Mr Ball
Mr. Ball subsequently stated that 'In the first place our intelligence with respect to Cuba is very hard and very good and very comprehensive, as a result of the number of refugees constantly coming out, and other kinds of opportunities that are provided to gain information with regard to the Cuban situation.

4. In response to a request for clarification on his position with respect to whether or not there were strategic missile sites in Cuba, Mr. Ball stated:

Up to this point we have no evidence that there are any surface-to-surface missile installations in Cuba capable of firing to a greater range (greater than the 25 to 30 nautical miles of the coastal defense missiles).

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Mr. Ford referred to this specific statement in the hearing of 5 February 1963 asking whether in view of the reports which I had discussed earlier, 21, 22 and 23 September, whether Secretary Ball was excluded from receiving such reports. I stated in effect that these reports were leads on the basis of which we could target reconnaissance flights to give us the hard evidence on the basis of which responsible actions could be taken.

Mr. Ball indicated in his testimony that:

I have attempted to give a summary here of the situation based on our intelligence estimates which the intelligence community has made with regard to this.

With this description by Mr. Ball together with the actual items of equipment and numbers of personnel described, Mr. Lipscomb then attempted to relate this, as he remembered it, to the 1 November estimates which were displayed on a chart in the Committee room during my appearance. Consequently, he was asking skeptically if the differences in these two estimates in arms and equipment came in during the period from 3 October to 14 October. I stated at the hearing that I knew of no inventory of equipment produced during September and October and I have checked and determined that there was no formal intelligence community document on inventories of Soviet military equipment in Cuba on 2 October.

The above are the facts as I know them. Please let me know if I can provide any additional information on this matter.

Sincerely,

John A. McCone
Director

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